

Topic: Nationalism In India

Q) Why growth of nationalism.....

A: Nationalism in Europe is usually associated with the formation of Nation states.

However, in the Colonies like India, growth of nationalism is intimately linked to anti - Colonial movement. It is rightly said that nationalism in the Colonies developed partly as a reaction to the policies of the Colonies. The Colonial rule negatively affected the different sections of the people in the Colonies which developed a common feeling of oppression among them. It provided them a good platform for the exchange of nationalist and liberal ideas. The common sense of oppression and exploitation brought together the people of different castes, classes & communities to fight against the Colonial rule. So, the anti- Colonial movement resulted in the growth of nationalism in the Colonies.

Q) How the First World War helped in the growth of national movement in India?

A: The First World War (1914-18)' was an event of far-reaching significance. It transformed the Indian national movement into a mass movement, as it added to the myseries of the different sections of the Indian society. The contribution of First World War in the growth of Indian national movement is highlighted in the following points.

- i) The First World War led to huge increase in defence expenditure. The result was huge national debt. It was met by increasing taxes, raising of customs duties, war loans & introduction of income tax. These measures created economic hardships for Indians as the prices doubled between 1913 & 1918.
- ii) The failure of crops in 1918-19 & 1920-21 in many parts of India led to acute food shortages. The further shortage of food crops was due to export of food to feed the army fighting abroad. It was accompanied by influenza epidemic which claimed 12 to 13 million lives.
- iii) Between the years of 1914 and 1923 forced recruitment for the army was going on without interruptions, from rural areas of India caused widespread reaction against British.

This all helped in the growth of national movement in India¹. This is evident

from the fact that the national movement spread to new areas, incorporated new social groups developed new modes of struggle after the war.

Q) Why Indians were outraged by the Rowlatt Act

A: The Indians were outraged by the Rowlatt Act because of the following reasons:

- i. Despite the united opposition of the Indian members, the imperial legislative council hurriedly passed this Act.
- ii. The Act was totally against the expectations of the Indians as they expected the establishment of a responsible Govt. after the World War - I.
- iii. The Act-denied protection of law" to Indians as it empowered the Govt. to arrest a person on mere doubt & detain him for two years without trial.
- iv. It strengthened the hands of Colonial Govt. to repress the political activities of Indian nationalist and revolutionaries.

This 'Black Act' was strongly reacted by the Indians. Gandhiji in protest called for nation-wide hartal on 6th April, 1919.

Q)Why Gandhiji decided to withdraw the Non -cooperation movement?

Ans: Non -cooperation movement began in January 1921. However, Gandhiji withdrew it in February, 1922 because it took a violent turn. Gandhiji firmly believed in the philosophy of Ahimsa or non-violence. He had at the very beginning declared non-cooperation movement to be a non- violent movement. However, on 3rd Feb, 1922 at Chauri-Chaura in Gorakhpur district of U.P. people burnt alive 22 policemen by burning a local police station. Here Gandhiji withdrew the movement realizing that it took a violent turn. He felt that the people were not yet ready for a mass movement. So, they need to be trained to understand how to carry a non-violent struggle successfully.

Textual Questions

Q) What is meant by the idea of Satyagraha?

A.

i) The chief aspect of Gandhi's ideology was Satyagraha. It was a non-violent method of mass agitation experimented & developed by Gandhiji against racist

government of South Africa. Confident over its success Gandhiji adopted it to fight against the British government of India.

ii) It includes the means like hartals, peaceful demonstrations, boycott, picketting etc.

iii) Gandhi defined it as truth force or Soul force. It emphasized the power of truth and need to search for truth. It suggested that if the cause was true, if the struggle was against injustice then physical force is not necessary to light the oppressor.

iv) In more practical terms it meant civil-disobedience. Non-violence or ahimsa was the cardinal principal of his message which was non-negotiable under all circumstances.

iv) It was based on the premise of superior moral power of the protestors capable of changing the heart of the oppressor through a display of moral strength.

v) To win the battle through non-violence the Satyagraha could do it by appealing to the conscience of the oppressor. The oppressor had to be persuaded to see the truth, instead of being forced to accept truth through the use of violence.

Q3) Write a newspaper report (short note) on 'The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre/ Brutality of British in open/ The most brutal incident in the Indian history.'

A: On 13th April 1919, a large crowd of about 10000 people had assembled in the enclosed Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. Some had come to protest against the repressive measures of the British Govt. & others to attend the annual Baishakhi fair. The people were mostly unaware about the imposition of Marshall Law in the city.

General Dyer, the British military commander plugged off all the possible exits & without any warning ordered his troops to open fire on the peaceful & unarmed protestors. The firing lasted for 10 minutes resulting into death of about 1000 civilians & wounded about 2000. The incident is popular in history as, 'Jallianwala Bagh Massacre'. The incident proved a turning-point in the Indian national movement. The brutal memories passed on from generation to generation & ultimately freed India from the British imperialism. The event was later described by General Dyer before the Hunter commission as the one meant for „producing a moral effect" among the Indians.

b) *Simon Commission:*

Why & how did the Indians Protest against Simon Commission.

ANS... In Nov, 1927 Govt. in Britain appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon*the commission was to look into the working of 1919 constitutional reforms in India & suggest changes. The appointment of the commission sparked off a wave of protest all over India as all the seven members of the commission were Englishmen (whites). The exclusion of Indians in the commission mobilized the Indians to start a new phase of struggle against British rule. Therefore, the congress in its Madras session of December, 1927 decided to boycott the commission. So, when the Simon commission arrived in India on 03 February, 1928, it was welcomed by Nation-wide hartal, black flags & the slogans of, "Go back Simon".

Q4) Compare the images of Bharat Mata in this Chapter (Nationalism in India) with the image of Germania in chapter I (The rise of Nationalism in Europe).

Ans: The artists in Europe tried to give a concrete shape to the abstract ideas of nationalism, liberty etc through personification. Same trend was followed by the Indian artists during the Indian National movement. The comparison between Germania & Bharat Mata is highlighted in the following points.

Germania	Bharat Mata
It is the female allegory of German nation was believed to instill nationalist feelings among the German people.	The devotion of people to Bharat Mata inspired nationalists to unify Indians & achieve freedom.
Germania stood as personifications of the revolutionary ideals like "liberty" and "the Republic".	The images of Bharat Mata came to be seen as symbols of nationalism.
Germania was portrayed in visual representations wearing a crown of oak leaves. As the German oak stands for heroism, so it was aimed to develop heroism among Germans.	Bharat Mata had been shown by different artists in different ways. Rabanindranath Tagore painted Bharat Mata as a calm, composed, divine & spiritual figure. But, in another figure she is shown with a Trishul standing besides a lion & an elephant symbolizing the power & authority of India.
As Germania did not reflect any religious basis in making Germania, it did not create any controversy among the people of Germany	As the concept of Bharat Mata is linked with Hinduism, it played an indirect role in the spread of communalism in pre-independent India.

Discuss

1)List all the different social groups which joined the non-cooperation movement of 1921-Then choose any three & write about their hopes & struggles to show why they joined the movement.

A: Non cooperation movement began in Jan, 1921 & was withdrawn in February, 1922.The different social-groups which joined the movement are enlisted as under:

- i. Middle-class (students, teachers, lawyers etc) in the towns,
- ii. Tribals in the hilly areas,
- iii. Plantation workers
- iv. Peasants in the countryside.

In the non-cooperation movement various social groups participated, but each with its own specific aspirations or hopes. Here we will highlight the hopes & struggles of three different social groups.

- i) **Peasants:** In the countryside, the movement incorporated the peasant struggles. The peasants directed their movements against oppressive landlords e.g. In Awadh, peasants demanded reduction of revenue, abolition of begar & social boycott of oppressive landlords. So, for peasants Swaraj meant freedom from the exploitation of landlords.
- ii) **Tribals:** Tribals interpreted the movement in their own way. They hoped that through this movement they could restore their traditional forest rights such as shifting cultivation, hunting & gathering etc. e.g. In Gudum Hills of Andhra Pradesh, tribal peasants started a militant guerilla movement against British under Alluri Sitarama Raju.

iii)PlantationWorkers: The Gandhian programme & Swaraj was interpreted by plantation workers in their own way. For them swaraj meant freedom to move freely in & out of the confined space of plantations which was denied to them under Inland Immigration Act of 1859. For them non-cooperation programme included defying authorities, leave plantations & move towards home. e.g. for plantation workers of Assam freedom meant retaining a link with the village from which they had come.

Q) Discuss the Salt March to make clear why it was an effective symbol of resistance against Colonialism.

A: The civil disobedience movement was started by Gandhiji with his famous salt March on 12th March 1930 . He started the March from Sabarmati Ashram along with his 78 trusted followers. They marched on foot about 240 miles for about 24 days & reached Dandhi (a small village on the western coast) on 6 April. 1930. Here, Gandhiji broke the unjust salt law by picking a handful of salt. The salt march was an effective symbol of resistance against Colonialism. This is revealed from the following points.

i) Gandhiji found the salt most powerful thing that could unite the nation as it was a thing consumed by the rich & poor alike. It was one of the essential items of food.

ii) The British Govt. of India had monopoly over production of salt & salt tax hit every section of the Indian society. So, to break salt law was seen an act which would give wider base to the anti-colonial movement & shook the British rule.

iii) During the course of salt march, thousands of volunteers were attracted towards Gandhiji. Gandhiji urged them to peacefully break the British laws. Thus salt march became an effective instrument of mobilizing people against Colonialism.

iv) It was an open challenge to British laws as it gathered nationwide support against British & led to the spread of civil disobedience movement.

3) Imagine you are a woman participating in the civil disobedience movement. Explain what the experience meant to your life.

A: As a woman, participating in the civil disobedience movement would be great experience for me. I would be highly delighted to become a part of anti-colonial movement. The participation in the movement along with thousands of like minded women for the national cause would raise the status of women in the society. So, participating in the civil disobedience movement provided me a great & cherishing experience in life.

Q) Why did political leaders differ sharply over the question of separate electorates?

A: Separate electorate system was an important part & feature of the British policy of divide & rule. The political leaders sharply differed over the question of separate electorates because of their respective compulsions & understandings which are described below:

- i) The leaders of All India Muslim league, like M.A. Jinnah & Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal favoured separate electorate as a safeguard for muslims. They urged that in a Hindu majority country, the interests of the Muslims would suffer without separate electorate.
- ii) RSS & Hindu Mahasabha. supported separate electorate, because the situation which forced the muslim leaders to demand for separate electorate was the result of activities of the RSS & Hindu Mahasabha Organisations.
- iii) The congress leaders like J.L. Nehru & Gandhiji opposed the system of separate electorates. They considered it as an obstacle in the way of unity of Indians & the national movement. Gandhiji even went on fast unto death to convince B.R. Ambedkar for joint electorate.
- iv) B.R Ambedkar , the leader of the Dalits, supported separate electorate for Dalits. He considered it an important tool for the upliftment of his people & to end the deprivation inflicted on them by the orthodox Brahmans.